

April 20, 2023



D.C. Update: NASADAD Attends Rx Summit in Atlanta, Alcohol Awareness Month, FDA Announces New Safety Label Changes for Opioid Pain Medicines, and More.

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Meet the Member

John Valera, AICP, SSA for Hawaii, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division Administrator, Hawaii Department of Health



John Valera, AICP, serves as Administrator of the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) at the Hawaii Department of Health, and has served at the ADAD in various capacities since 2016, including serving as Acting Administrator for over 1.5 years. Mr. Valera also serves as the SSA for Hawaii. Prior to his service at ADAD, he was a planner, manager, and program specialist working on a variety of policy development initiatives and projects in environmental management and substance use. He has a Master's in Urban Planning from the University of Hawaii and a Bachelor's in Planning and Public Administration from the University of Southern California. In his spare time, he enjoys jogging and spending time with his family.

NASADAD News

NASADAD and Members Attend Rx Summit in Atlanta

A number of NASADAD members along with Executive Director Robert Morrison attended the Rx and Illicit Drug Summit held in Atlanta, Georgia from April 10 -13. The conference featured a number of sessions related to program, practice, research, and advocacy. The meeting also allowed for some small side meetings between NASADAD and federal substance use policy leaders. These leaders included Dr. Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Assistant Secretary, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA); Dr. Nora Volkow, Director, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA); and Dr. Rahul Gupta,



NASADAD Attends Briefing on 988 and Crisis Services with Members of Congress

On Tuesday, April 18, Lacy Adams, Public Policy Analyst, and Robert Morrison, NASADAD Executive Director, attended a briefing on 988 and crisis services where Rep. Chris Stewart (R-UT) and Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA) served as special guest speakers. The briefing was sponsored by the Mental Health Liaison Group (MHLG). The Congressman talked about the importance 988 and thanked those in the room for their work on implementation. Both Representatives spent time in the armed forces (Moulton in the Marines and Stewart in the Air Force) and discussed their respective views about the work that must be done to improve service delivery to veterans. Rep. Moulton in particular has spoken openly about his experience with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) linked to four tours in Iraq with the Marines. The briefing ended with a dialogue with the audience about future priorities related to mental health and substance use disorder policy. Both Representatives expressed their desire to see action related to youth mental health issues linked to overexposure to social media.



Picture: Rep. Moulton on the left and Rep. Stewart on the right.

NASADAD attends Brookings Institution event on Recovery and the Workplace

On Tuesday, April 18, Lacy Adams, Public Policy Analyst attended a briefing by the Brookings Institution on “The economic impact of the opioid epidemic: Labor supply and the workplace.” The discussion included a fireside chat with Dr. Rahul Gupta, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, and Julie Wernau of the Wall Street Journal on the opioid epidemic’s impact on the labor force and how workplaces can become recovery-friendly. Following the discussion, a panel including Dr. Tisamarie Sherry (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), Kyle Zimmer (International Union of Operating Engineers), Dana Lariviere (Chameleon Group), and moderated by Richard Frank (Brookings) discussed strategies to supporting continued participation and recovery in the workplace for someone with a substance use disorder. The event is available for viewing [here](#). A blog post was also simultaneously released on [the Economic Impact of the Opioid Epidemic](#).



Capitol Hill Happenings

Democratic Committee Leaders Write Letter to Top Health Insurers Regarding Coverage of Preventive Care Services

Last week, House and Senate Democratic Health Committee leaders wrote commitment request letters to 12 of the largest health insurers and trade associations representing employer-sponsored health plans in the U.S. requesting information about the impact of the Northern District of Texas’s decision in *Braidwood Management Inc. v. Becerra* on coverage of preventive care services. The court’s ruling struck down “...the [Affordable Care Act’s \(ACA\) requirement](#) that most health plans and issuers cover preventive services recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) with an A or B rating without cost-sharing.”

The letters was signed by House Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member Frank Pallone Jr. (D-NJ-6), House Ways and Means Committee Ranking Member Richard Neal (D-MA-1), and House Education and the Workforce Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA-3), as well as Senate Finance Committee Chairman Ron Wyden (D-OR), and Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Chairman Bernie Sanders (I-VT). The Committee leaders requested responses by April 19 regarding whether the health

insurers and trade associations intend to cover all recommended preventive services without cost-sharing while the case's appellate review is concluded.

The House Energy and Commerce Democratic Health Committee's press release, including links to all of the commitment request letters, can be found [here](#).

Around the Agencies

HHS Releases Guidance to Encourage States to Apply for New Medicaid Reentry Section 1115 Demonstration Opportunity to Increase Health Care for People Leaving Carceral Facilities

The Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMCS) released a [State Medicaid Director Letter](#) regarding a new Medicaid Reentry Section 1115 Demonstration Opportunity designed to help increase care for individuals who are incarcerated in the period immediately prior to their release. The new demonstration opportunity would allow State Medicaid programs to cover services that address various health concerns, including substance use disorders and other chronic health conditions.

Read the [press release](#) and the [full letter](#) for more information on the demonstration opportunity.

Alcohol Awareness Month Feature

April is Alcohol Awareness Month! This gives us an opportunity to discuss and raise awareness of the public health impact of alcohol misuse. Given the fact that nearly half of the adult population within the United States consumes alcohol, it is important to understand how to do so responsibly and the risks and complications that can come with alcohol use. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offer great resources for understanding this issue, such as their [alcohol basics factsheet](#). To see the CDC's highlight for Alcohol Awareness Month, visit their website [here](#). Additionally, you can also find information across the [National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism \(NIAAA\) website](#) to learn more about how NIAAA supports research and initiatives to generate, disseminate, and apply fundamental knowledge about the effects of alcohol on health and well-being.

FDA Announces New Safety Label Changes for Opioid Pain Medicines



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently [announced](#) several required updates to the prescribing information for immediate-release and extended-release opioid pain medicines. The new required safety labeling changes can be found in the [Drug Safety Communication](#) and include:

- “the risk of overdose increases as the dosage increases for all opioid pain medicines;
- IR opioids should not be used for an extended period of time unless a patient’s pain remains severe enough to require them and alternative treatment options continue to be inadequate;
- many acute pain conditions treated in the outpatient setting require no more than a few days of an opioid pain medicine; and
- it is recommended to reserve ER/LA opioid pain medicines for severe and persistent pain that requires an extended treatment period with a daily opioid pain medicine and for which alternative treatment options are inadequate.”

Additionally, these updates provide a warning about opioid-induced hyperalgesia (OIH), including information about differentiating OIH symptoms from those of opioid tolerance and withdrawal.

The FDA's press release announcing the new safety label changes for opioid pain medicines can be found [here](#).

New HRSA Funding Opportunity: Rural Communities Opioid Response Program Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) announced a new \$9 million funding opportunity for the [FY 2023 Rural Communities Opioid Response Program - Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health \(RCORP-CABH\)](#). This program is designed “...to establish and expand sustainable behavioral health care services for children and adolescents aged 5-17 years who live in rural communities, and to prevent substance misuse.” Over the four-year period of performance, award recipients will “...use RCORP-CABH funding to establish and expand service delivery, provide training and peer mentorship, and develop community partnerships.” HRSA will offer up to 9 awards of \$1 million each. Applications are due May 24, 2023.

SAMHSA Announces National Prevention Week: May 3-7, 2023



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) [National Prevention Week](#) is May 7-13, 2023. National Prevention Week is “a national public education platform for showcasing the work of communities and organizations dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of substance misuse prevention and positive mental health.” SAMHSA will offer several events, activities, and resources throughout the week, including two webinars:

- The [“Talk. They Hear You.”®](#) Campaign Relaunch Event
 - This campaign aims to “...reduce underage drinking and substance use by providing guardians with information and resources they need to address these issues.” This webinar will offer an overview of the campaign, as well as discussions with featured partners about how they have implemented the “Talk. They Hear You.” ® campaign in their communities. This no-cost event will be offered on May 8th, at 1:00 pm (ET). [Registration](#) is required.
- The [Communities Talk to Prevent Alcohol and Other Drug Misuse](#) Prevention Success Stories Webinar
 - This webinar will showcase and celebrate prevention success stories from four diverse communities and lessons learned. The Communities Talk campaign aims to provide “...prevention resources and planning stipends to thousands of community-based organizations, colleges, and universities to develop tailored strategies that work in their communities.” This no-cost webinar will be held on May 10, at 2:00 pm (ET). [Registration](#) is required.

Webinars to Watch

COSSUP Webinar: Program-Based Strategies for Opioid Diversion in the Fire and Emergency Services

The Bureau of Justice Assistance’s (BJA) [Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program \(COSSUP\)](#) is offering a webinar on [Program-Based Strategies for Opioid Diversion in the Fire and Emergency Services](#). This no-cost webinar is on April 27, 2023, at 2:00 PM (ET). The webinar will provide “...an opportunity to learn about emerging best practices from the fire and emergency services in program-based strategies for opioid diversion”. This training will feature a panel of local fire and emergency medical services leaders who will discuss how their programs are helping address the opioid crisis. Registration is required.

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